

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 01916 270843Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 IO-13 /111 W
-----066908 271545Z /43

R 270747Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8198
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
OSLO PEKING 084

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 1916

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, CH, US
SUBJ: FRIENDLIER CHINESE DIPLOMATS

REF: KHARTOUM 1836

1. PRC AMBASSADOR WANG CHIN-CHUAN RECEIVED CHARGE WARMLY DURING APRIL 26 COURTESY CALL, BELIEVED TO BE A FIRST HERE. CHINESE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN CORRECT WITH AMERICANS AT SOCIAL FUNCTIONS IN ADDIS, AT LEAST IN RECENT YEARS, BUT STAND-OFFISH NEVERTHELESS. CHARGE'S CALL WAS INSPIRED BY CHINESE AMBASSADOR'S GOING OUT OF HIS WAY -- AT RECENT DEAN'S RECEPTION FOR DEPARTING FRENCH AMBASSADOR -- TO EXPRESS REGRET THAT PMGSE HAD "EXPELLED" US POL COUNSELOR.

2. HOUR-AND-HALF LONG CONVERSATION THROUGH INTERPRETER REVEALED NO SURPRISES. AFTER WELCOMING REMARKS, INCLUDING HOPE FOR COMPLETE NORMALIZATION OF US-CHINESE
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RELATIONS ON BASIS OF SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE, PRC AMBASSADOR WENT INTO CONTROLLED BUT PERSISTENT DIATRIBE AGAINST SOVIETS AND THEIR "CUBAN MERCENARIES." CURRENT ACTIVITIES IN HORN OF AFRICA HE SEES AS MERE PART OF SOVIET STRATEGIC PLAN TO ENCIRCLE WESTERN EUROPE, CONTROL STRATEGIC WATERWAYS ON WHICH EUROPEAN POL SUPPLIES ARE HEAVILY DEPENDENT, AND ERADICATE US INFLUENCE. SOVS AND CUBANS MUST BE

FORCED TO WITHDRAW FROM HORN. BUT HOW? HE HAD NO SUGGESTIONS OTHER THAN US SHOULD STATE POSITION FORCEFULLY TO SOVIETS. HE GENTLY CHIDED CHARGE FOR WHAT HE SEES AS CURRENT WEAKNESS ON PART OF US.

3. WANG IS STAUNCH IN HIS BELIEF THAT ETHIOPIAN GOVT AND MASSES MUST INEVITABLY RISE AGAINST SOVIET OPPRESSION. NEVERTHELESS, US AND CHINA SHOULD LOSE NO OPPORTUNITY TO CONDEMN SOVIET AND CUBAN INTERFERENCE IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS. IN RESPONSE TO CHARGE'S QUESTION WHY CHINA HAS ESCAPED CRITICISM FOR TAKING SUCH POSITION (E.G., AFTER SIAD BARRE'S VISIT TO PEKING) WHILE PMGSE REACTS VITRIOLICALLY AGAINST US, WANG VENTURED IT WAS BECAUSE OF THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR TRADITIONAL ROLES IN ETHIOPIA. (THERE IS A LOT OF TRUTH TO THAT, PARTICULARLY SINCE PMGSE SEES US, WESTERN AND CONSERVATIVE ARAB ALLIES AS A CONCRETE THREAT, BUT NOT THE CHINESE.) THEREFORE, IT WAS ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT FOR CHINA TO KEEP DRAWING ATTENTION TO EVIL INTERFERENCE OF SOVIET CULPRITS. IN MEANTIME, BOTH CHINA AND US SHOULD SHOW PATIENCE WHILE HISTORY TAKES ITS INALTERABLE COURSE AGAINST SOVIETS.

4. WANG IS CONVINCED SOVIETS AND CUBANS WILL INTERVENE MILITARILY IN ERITREA AS THEY DID IN OGADEN BUT THAT SUCH INTERVENTION WILL BE MORE VULNERABLE TO THIRD WORLD CRITICISM. HE EXPRESSED TOTAL IGNORANCE OF ANY PLANS OF

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EASTERN EUROPEANS, SUCH AS GDR, TO TRY TO BRING ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ONE OR MORE ERITREAN LIBERATION FRONTS AND PMGSE.

5. CHARGE BRIEFED WANG ON OUR CURRENT ASSESSMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS FOR WHICH HE ACTED GENUINELY PLEASED TO HAVE SOMETHING TO REPORT TO PEKING. EMBASSY DOES NOT EXPECT MUCH FROM OUR NEW RELATIONS WITH PRC EMBASSY BUT BELIEVES IT IS SOMEWHAT USEFUL IN LONG RUN AS SIGNAL TO ETHIOPIANS THAT WE CAN HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH REVOLUTIONARY REGIMES, A MAIN THEME OF OUR MESSAGE TO SKEPTICAL ETHIOPIAN RADICALS.

MATHERON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SPHERE OF INFLUENCE, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, CONTACTS WITH COMMUNIST OFFICIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ADDIS01916
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780180-0526
Format: TEL
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780412/aaaaajnt.tel
Line Count: 107
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7c4dbda6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 KHARTOUM 1836
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2835613
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRIENDLIER CHINESE DIPLOMATS
TAGS: PINR, PDIP, CH, US, UR, ET, CU, (WANG CHIN-CHUAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7c4dbda6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014